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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

THROUGH: S/S HRM

SUBJECT: A. I. D. Deputy Administrator's Report on Pakistan

A. PRESIDENT YAHYA KHAN'S CONTROL IN EAST PAKISTAN
IS INCREASINGLY LIMITED

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Growing Isolation of President Yahya Khan. In Islamabad October 27, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Secretary to the Cabinet, told me that President Yahya Khan was increasingly isolated from events in East Pakistan. He believed the Army's reporting from East Pakistan had been misleading the President about recent developments. The same points, concerning President Yahya Khan's growing isolation and misleading reporting from East Pakistan, were made by M. M. Ahmad, Economic Advisor to the President.

Autonomous Army Control in East Pakistan. The Pakistan Army in East Pakistan has achieved nearly autonomous control of the province, in many respects independent of the policies and direction of President Yahya Khan in Islamabad. Only foreign affairs affecting East Pakistan is firmly in the hands of Islamabad. The relative isolation of President Yahya Khan is probably the result of many factors. Indications of this isolation are that: (a) Army commanders in the East pursue independent military operations, (b) the Army governs the province behind the facade of the puppet civilian Governor Malik and his cabinet -- who are completely dependent on the Army for their personal security -- with limited reference to Islamabad,

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(c) little but Pakistani successes and India's perfidy is reported from Dacca to Islamabad, and (d) President Yahya Khan lacks independent means of observation, reporting and verification of events in the East.

Myth and Reality on Civilian Support in East Pakistan.
President Yahya Khan told us October 28 that "civilianization" of government in East Pakistan, under Governor Malik and his Cabinet, is succeeding in stabilizing the political situation. According to Yahya Khan, when elections have filled the vacated Awami League Assembly seats, "political accommodation" for a loyal provincial government will have been completed. Although the Army openly runs these elections, Yahya Khan believes the political stability after elections will assure that India's strategy of supporting insurrection will have been defeated -- and that Mrs. Gandhi will then have nothing in hand to achieve her objectives except recourse to war. The myth of growing political stability in East Pakistan is almost certainly fed to Yahya Khan by reports from his civilian Governor and his Army commanders.

The reality is that Army policies and operations -- behind the facade of a civilian government -- are progressively and seriously alienating the Bengali population in East Pakistan, and that the seeds of rebellion are not only those sown by India. The wide gap between the myth of growing stability as seen by Yahya Khan, and the reality of political deterioration was most striking from comparing my recent visit to East Pakistan, October 21 - 26, to observations made during the earlier August 19 - 25 trip.

B. PAKISTAN ARMY POLICY AND OPERATIONS IN EAST PAKISTAN

Civil Affairs Run by the Military Advisor to the Governor.
Major General Rao Farman Ali Khan is the Army's civil affairs specialist with ten years service in the East. As Military Advisor, he sits in the Governor's House and runs the Province on behalf of the Governor. My call on General Farman Ali Khan October 25th interrupted a meeting with some ten of his military colleagues. They were, he said, selecting the men who would be elected in the next Provincial elections.

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Army Policy is Selective Terror and Reprisal. General Farman Ali Khan described the level of Mukti guerrilla insurgency as somewhat intensified but manageable because the newly trained Bengali guerrillas entering from India feared to take action. Over 1,400 guerrillas had entered Dacca district in the last 30 days but only a few had chosen to fight. He acknowledged, off-the-record, that this was due to the terroristic reprisal policy. He also acknowledged that terror and reprisal had an "unfortunate effect on Bengali attitudes." But he said, "all Army commanders had concluded that insurgency was more of a problem in areas where the Army had been too lenient and had not demonstrated clean-up operations."

The Pakistan Army is one of the best disciplined and professional infantry forces in the world. Despite orders from Islamabad that the Army not engage in terrorist operations against the civilian population -- and repeated assurances to U. S. officials to this effect -- Pakistan Army commanders continue to carry out terror raids against the population and villages, even within the environs of Dacca and in sight of its large foreign community.

Increasing Chaos in Rural East Pakistan. General Farman Ali Khan said the Army sought to leave the fighting of the Mukti guerrillas to the newly armed Bengali "Rasikars", who now numbered 60,000. He acknowledged that "Rasikars" -- raised as village levies for guard duty with only ten days training, and without NCOs or officers -- did not constitute a disciplined force.

However, the "Rasikars" are a destabilizing element -- living off the land, able to make life and death decisions by denouncing collaborators and openly pillaging and terrorizing villagers without apparent restraint from the Army. With villagers caught between the Rasikars and Mukti guerrillas, law and order is breaking down rapidly in rural East Pakistan. Hence, the rural population is moving either to the cities which are now over populated or going to India. The flow of Muslim refugees to India has recently increased -- many of them small land-holders and farmers who are normally the more stable political elements.

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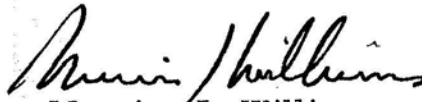
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Army Policy to Clear East Pakistan of Hindus. The Pakistan Army is ideologically anti-Hindu and their historic experience in West Pakistan, from the time of partition, has been that Hindus should go to India. Hence, reprisal operations naturally continue to focus against Hindus. Without law or order, except that sanctioned by the Army, Hindu lives and property are not safe in East Pakistan today.

General Farman Ali Khan accepted the estimate that at least 80 percent of the Hindus had left East Pakistan. He, off-the-record, spoke of about six million refugees who had gone to India and he anticipated that a further 1,500,000 refugees would probably go to India "before the situation settles down." (1,500,000 is a reasonable estimate of the number of Hindus still in East Pakistan.)

C. FORM AND CONTENT OF YAHYA KHAN'S DIPLOMACY

With the Army's autonomous control in East Pakistan, President Yahya Khan's role affecting the Eastern Province appears to be primarily in foreign affairs, including the managing of the U.S. relationship. All official American suggestions are immediately taken seriously and lead to major policy statements by President Yahya Khan in Islamabad. The result is "public relations diplomacy", but it is important not to confuse the form with the substance of policy. Elections, political accommodation, welcoming the return of all refugees, amnesty -- these are fine policy pronouncements, but their implementation is in the hands of the Army commanders who govern the Eastern Province, and these Army commanders do not as yet appear subject to foreign influences.


Maurice J. Williams

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